



Interdepartmental Coordination Council for Rural Affairs

Executive Order 06-37 Report



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History

Missouri's rural communities are an integral and important part of our state's heritage and future economic growth. In order for rural communities to continue to increase their productivity and remain competitive in a global economy, we must build upon our success. The 2005 Governor's Review Commission identified the importance of addressing the unique interests and needs of rural Missouri.

Our Charge

An Interdepartmental Coordination Council for Rural Affairs was created by Governor Blunt to investigate and address the issues presented by the 2005 Governor's Review Commission in Recommendation #7--Executive Order 06-37. The Council's charge is to provide interdepartmental coordination, communication, and efficiency to assist in Missouri's efforts to: 1.) Address the unique interests and needs of rural Missouri; 2.) Effectively provide state government services in rural Missouri; 3.) Coordinate Missouri's soil and water conservation programs; and 4.) Coordinate rural transportation planning and projects. A plan to construct the necessary components for a deliverable, sustainable, and accountable program is contained in this report. In accordance with the Executive Order 06-37, the Interdepartmental Council will expire on June 30, 2007.

Mission

To revitalize private ownership of business in rural Missouri and rekindle the entrepreneurial spirit.

Objective 1: *Increase investment in rural Missouri.*

Strategy 1.1: Promote rural Missouri as a great place to do business and create an outstanding climate for rural businesses and entrepreneurs by providing technical assistance (such as that offered by the Small Business Development Centers) and financial assistance (such as that offered by the Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority and the Department of Economic Development).

Strategy 1.2: Increase the amount of tax credits available to farmer investors to encourage investment in value-added entities.

Strategy 1.3: Promote the continued growth of Missouri's alternative fuel industry and the co-location of complementary businesses.

Strategy 1.4: Create a web-based, multi-agency rural resource center.

Performance Standards:

- Number of high-wage jobs created and retained in rural Missouri
- Dollars of private investment in rural Missouri as a result of tax credits
- Value of loans and venture capital acquired
- Percentage of rural Missouri homes and businesses with high-speed Internet access
- Utilization rates for the web-based rural resource center.

Objective 2: *Improve education and training opportunities in rural communities to ensure wealth and job creation.*

Strategy 2.1: Enhance the availability and effectiveness of programs that assist youth and young beginning and established farmers with business planning, financial accounting, farm business analysis, on-farm consultation, group educational classes, organizing producer groups, value-added initiatives, and agri-leadership organizations. For example, educational programs such as the Farm Business Management Analysis program (FBMA), 4-H, FFA, and the Community Enterprise and Entrepreneurial Development program (CEED) will contribute to this effort.

Strategy 2.2: Involve businesses and community leaders in the development of vocational and technical education programs in all regions of the state. For example, Regional Technical Education Councils (RTECs) support the growth of degree and certificate programs in a diverse range of vocational and technical fields. In collaboration with the departments of Economic Development (DED) and Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), these programs administer customized and contract training programs for Missouri businesses.

Strategy 2.3: Enhance community leadership knowledge and skills and facilitate community planning and visioning.

Strategy 2.4: Enhance training and direct consultations for start-up and existing businesses.

Performance Standards:

- Number of people served in training and direct consultations
- Number of jobs created and retained
- Number of businesses started, enhanced, and retained.

Objective 3: *Improve the quality and quantity of Missouri's water resources.*

Strategy 3.1: Strengthen Soil and Water Conservation Districts' involvement in addressing water quality and quantity issues.

Strategy 3.2: Provide critical infrastructure development that allows communities to continue growing and supports the creation of new agricultural and industrial employment opportunities. For example, State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans account for approximately \$177,660,000 of economic stimulus while providing critical infrastructure improvements for Missourians.

Strategy 3.3: Coordinate across all levels of state government (including education) to improve water resources infrastructure through training, collaboration, and promotion of best management practices in watershed management.

Performance Standards:

- Amount of grants and low-interest loans awarded to eligible local governments for construction and improvement of water or wastewater infrastructure
- Number of communities utilizing the infrastructure grant and loan programs
- Percent of stream miles and lake acres that are safe and usable for the designated beneficial purpose
- Percent of permitted facilities in compliance with the state and federal Clean Water Act, including monitoring and reporting requirements.

Objective 4: *Improve rural transportation planning and services.*

Strategy 4.1: Address Missouri and Mississippi River navigation issues to ensure more navigable days. Increased utilization of this economically and environmentally friendly infrastructure will reduce reliance on transportation methods that cause more pollution and shorten the life of our highway and rail systems.

Strategy 4.2: Connect regional planning efforts and coordinate statewide rural transportation objectives with appropriate data analysis regarding use, demand, safety, and demographics. Encourage the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) to solicit and consider input from designated entities that represent the interests of rural Missouri and from rural Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) to create a more comprehensive, statewide focus on rural transportation issues.

Strategy 4.3: Encourage both public/private investment and partnerships in rural transportation.

Performance Standards:

- Number of days per year that the Missouri River is navigable
- Number of rural transportation projects initiated and completed
- Comparative evaluation of rural transportation modes
- Number and percent of rural highways that are within acceptable tolerance limits for accidents.